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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5712
INFO RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY PRIORITY 9744
RUEHAAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT PRIORITY 1605
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK PRIORITY 3922
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 0897
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 1062
RUEHK/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 1826
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE PRIORITY
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 6600
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 4821
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 9938
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 1040
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT PRIORITY 2324
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 0977
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 3894
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 0914
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 9163
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 1622
RHWSMRC/USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
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TAGS: AF MOPS PK PREL PTER
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER KASURI ON ANTI-PAKISTAN RHETORIC
AND PAK-AFG JIRGAS

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) During a December 22 meeting following his return from Iran, Foreign Minister Kasuri speculated on the motives behind the verbal offensive that Afghan President Karzai and other senior Government of Afghanistan (GOA) officials launched against Pakistan only days after the Foreign Minister's December 7-9 visit to Kabul. FM Kasuri is inclined to believe that Karzai wishes to abandon his proposal for large national jirga and is now creating a media storm designed to drive Pakistan away from President Musharraf's commitment to parallel jirgas.

¶2. (C) Genuinely puzzled by Karzai's motivation in attacking Pakistan, Kasuri wondered whether Karzai himself has a clear vision of what he wants. Indeed, after Karzai's December anti-Pakistan press campaign, Kasuri has begun to wonder whether Karzai has realized that the broad national jirga is not such a good idea after all; perhaps Karzai's rhetorical attacks on Pakistan are intended to drive Islamabad away from the September 27 agreement to hold the jirgas, Kasuri mused. If Karzai does want these jirgas, Kasuri argued, why would he be attacking Pakistan rather than soliciting our support? Kasuri returned to this theme several times in the course of the conversation, asking whether Washington had analyzed whether Karzai is actually seeking a way out from the jirga commitment. Kasuri considered alternative explanations for the barrage of anti-Pakistani rhetoric, suggesting that perhaps the Iranians, Russians or Indians were goading Karzai into this unseemly screed. (Note: Although Kasuri did not name the USG as another possible source of anti-Pakistan rhetoric, GOP officials have advised the Ambassador that many senior Pakistan leaders subscribe to that theory. End note.)

¶3. (C) Describing the toll that the cross-border rhetoric

takes on Pakistani public opinion, FM Kasuri asked that the U.S. tell Karzai to stop the public attacks. The Ambassador replied that U.S. officials have already counseled President Karzai to desist from further anti-Pakistan remarks.

¶4. (C) Kasuri told the Ambassador that he has instructed his staff to prepare a memo for President Musharraf recommending that the GOP accept Karzai's vision of a expansive national jirga, if that is what it takes to keep Karzai happy. Of course, Kasuri continued, if Karzai does not stop the rhetoric, Musharraf will reject the MFA recommendation out of hand. Kasuri underscored the bottom line: Karzai needs to stop bashing Pakistan so that the GOP can help him succeed.

¶5. (C) Kasuri reviewed the GOP's understanding of what exactly was agreed upon at the September 27 White House Iftar, downplaying the different visions in Islamabad and Kabul of the shape and dimensions of the Pak-Afghan jirga. President Musharraf and his advisers are confident that Presidents Bush and Karzai fully understood what Musharraf envisioned during the September 27 discussion, noting that President Bush had questioned Governor Orakzai as to what the North Waziristan Agency jirga entailed; Secretary Rice had done the same with Chief Minister Durrani. Kasuri said that there is no reason to think that Karzai was confused about what Musharraf meant when he agreed to replicate the jirga on the other side of the border in order to solicit tribal support against the Taliban. Although indicating a willingness to go along with Karzai's current proposal for an expansive, national event, Kashuri noted his reservations: a national jirga may respond to Karzai's need to reaffirm broad national support for his government, but will do little to

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address Pashtun concerns or solve security issues along the border.

CROCKER